

“Who Are You, Lord” (Excerpt)

by

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It is all about One God and One Man

The Father and the Son are two entities – two individuals.

NOT TWO GODS and NOT TWO PERSONS WHO ARE GOD

The Father is the ONE GOD & Jesus is the ONE begotten HUMAN SON of GOD

Answer to Question 2

Is the Father a distinct person from the man Christ Jesus?

Let us now consider David Bernard's statement quoted earlier, "nowhere does the Bible teach a separation of persons in the Godhead."

That statement is true. God is certainly an uncomplicated One. But Scripture also refers constantly to a Father-Son relationship, a distinct twoness, foretold in the Old Testament, demonstrated on earth and continuing eternally.

In John 17:3, Jesus referred to His Father as "the only true God" (John 17:3). This same "only true God" declared in Isaiah 45:5, "I am the LORD and there is none else." The word translated "only" in John 17:3 is defined in Strong's Analytical Concordance as meaning "sole", "single" or "alone." Whatever is described as "only" is in a class of its own; it is unique. Such being the case, the question arises just how Jesus Himself, although a man, could simultaneously be "the only true God"? Surely the man, Jesus Christ, is differentiating here between Himself, the "sent" one, and His Father the "only true God." It is the Father who is "God alone" (Ps. 86:10). Now if God is a solitary "one" and "only" entity who is a spirit being, can He retain His oneness, His aloneness, and His intangibility if He is inseparably joined to the man, Christ Jesus?

The term "the only true God" is a title which Jesus reserved exclusively for His Father, but it cannot include the Jesus Himself. There is a clear distinction between the two. By addressing His Father as "the only true God" the Lord Jesus surely excluded all others - including Himself - from being the one and only true God.

By commencing with the inseparable unity of the Father and the Son, the "oneness" concept becomes fraught with problems. One of these difficulties is that the separate and distinct functions of the Father and His Son seem to become blurred to the point where there is no real Father-Son relationship.

"Oneness" teachers refer constantly to the "humanity" and "Deity" of the God-man. I believe that if the terms "Father" and "Son" were preferred, the separate identities of our Heavenly Father and His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ would be more apparent.

A God-man who plays different roles is difficult to reconcile with those Scriptures that teach the separate functions of a Heavenly Father and His Son, the man Christ Jesus. Bible scholars have calculated that the term "God" (*O Theos*) is used around 1,300 times in the New Testament to define the Father as distinct from His Son, the Lord Jesus.

For example, we are told that Jesus, the exalted man appears "in the presence of God for us," (Heb. 9:24), that He is "seated at the right hand of God," (Rom. 8:34), "sat down in His Father's throne," (Rev. 3:21), is "an advocate with the Father," (1 John 2:1), is the "mediator between God and men," (1 Tim. 2:5), and that He "continues ever" (Heb. 7:25). Paul tells us that "the Head of Christ is God" (1 Cor. 11:3).

We have in Hebrews 10:12 the following: "But this man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God." What can this mean except that Jesus is presently still a man, exalted, and appearing in the presence of God for us?

At present, Jesus "lives by the power of God" (2 Cor. 13:4), is totally dependent upon His Father, and Paul adds in that same verse that "we shall live with Him by the power of God toward you."

Jesus now "lives unto God" (Romans 6:10), promoting His Father's glory and advancing His Kingdom with His every effort being directed to accomplishing the purposes of God. Since His being glorified, "He *has obtained* a more excellent ministry" (Heb. 8:6). Although He has become "heir of all things" and maintains and superintends the whole universe by delegated authority, He is wholly submissive to the will of His Father.

Following His ascension, Jesus was glorified by His Father (Acts 3:13) and now He is seated in His Father's throne (Rev.3:21). In Rev. 3:12 Jesus refers four times to "my God":

Him that overcomes will I make a pillar
in the temple of **my God**,
and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him
the name of **my God**,
and the name of
the city of **my God**, which is new Jerusalem,
which cometh down
out of heaven from **my God**: and I will write upon him my new name.

These Scriptures are not teaching a multiplicity of "persons" who are God but they do teach the present separate identities and functions of God the Father and His human Son, the Lord Jesus.

Paul tells us in Rom. 8:17 that believers are "heirs of God and *joint-heirs* with Christ." But if Jesus were actually God, can it be said that we are "joint-heirs" of God with Him?

We could look now at 1 Cor. 15:24-28. Here we learn that Jesus is reigning now in His Father's Kingdom and that He will continue to reign until the time of the end, when He will put down all opposition to His rule. We are told four times in these verses that God "put all things under the feet" of His Son, a situation that is to continue until the end, when the Son will "deliver up the Kingdom to God" and the Son will be subject to His Father. However, there is no suggestion here, or elsewhere that the Son will ever cease to be the Son. We read in 2 Pet. 1:11 of the "everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."

Turning to John's writings, we find that in his Gospel, John did not seek to establish the supposed Deity of Christ. Rather his aim was to have men believe that "Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God" (John 20:30-31). That is a truth that Jesus Himself repeatedly affirmed. The fact that John did not aim to prove that Jesus Christ was God, but rather that He was the Son of God should discourage any effort to establish the supposed Deity of Christ from John's Gospel. However, it is common practice for "oneness" writers to appeal to John's Gospel to support their view that Jesus is God.

In John 8:29, Jesus said, "He that sent me is with me, the Father hath not left me alone for I do always those things that please Him." In verses 17 and 18 of the same chapter it reads, "It is also written in your law, that the testimony of two men is true. I am one that bears witness of myself and the Father that sent me bears witness of me." Surely two separate entities are in mind here, the Father and His Son.

In his first epistle, John states in Chapter 1:3 "...truly our fellowship is with the Father *and with His Son, Jesus Christ.*" John was in no doubt as to the ongoing duality of the Father *and the Son*, and he urged a similar understanding for his readers. Further be warned against the heresy of "denying the Father and the Son" which he described as Antichrist (1 John 2:22). This present duality is also expressed in 1 John 2:1 where we read, "If any man sin, we have an advocate *with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.*"

John's second letter carries the following greeting, "Grace be with you, mercy and peace, from God the Father *and from the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father*, in truth and in love (2 John 3).

1 Tim. 2:5 describes the present day mediatorial Father-Son functions as follows, "For there is one God and *one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.*" Paul explains further the role of a mediator in Gal.3:20 in the following terms, "Now a mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one." Now if God and Jesus are one person, how could Jesus, if He is a "God-man," be a mediator between Himself and man? The work of mediator which Jesus is now performing makes it impossible for Him to be God. He is the Son of God, a man, mediating between God and men. God is certainly one, altogether and indivisible Deity, but Jesus also is one, altogether and indivisible humanity, but now glorified.

Paul has a further reference to the Father and the Son as separate entities in 1 Cor. 8:6 where he writes, "But to us there is but one God the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things and we by him." Here we are encouraged to think in terms of a twoness, a Father and a Son. Paul also reminded the believers at Corinth that a faithful God had called them "to the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord" (1 Cor. 1:9).

Likewise, the epistle to the Hebrews abounds in references to the separate functions of the Father and the Son, especially in relation to the Lord Jesus as our great high priest, appearing in the presence of God for us (Heb. 9:24), and making intercession. Heb. 7:24-25 tells us: "This *man*, because He continues *ever*, hath an unchangeable priesthood. Wherefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him seeing He ever lives to make intercession for them."

This high priestly ministry of our Lord Jesus, interceding for us before God, is of paramount importance, and of inestimable value to the believer. However, this ministry cannot be appreciated unless the Lord Jesus is seen as a separate entity from His Father, presenting to God the merits of His death on our behalf.

On page 106 of his book under the heading "The ending of the Sonship," David Bernard states, *inter alia*, "When the reasons for the Sonship cease to exist, God (Jesus) will cease acting in His role as Son and the Sonship will be submerged back into the greatness of God."

However, this assumption raises some fundamental problems. God is not "acting in His role as Son." The Father is the Father and the Son is the Son; they are a duality. The ascended Christ, in Revelation 1:18 said "I am He that lives, and was dead and behold I am alive for evermore, Amen." There is no cessation of the Sonship! Further, in Matthew 25:31, Jesus said, "When the Son of man shall come in His glory... He shall sit upon the throne of His glory."

In the book of the Revelation we learn of the eternal ministry of the Lord Jesus, the Son of God, as a separate entity from His Father. The opening verse of Revelation 1 reads, "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave to Him--". If, as is claimed by David Bernard, "Jesus now exercises His power as God through a glorified human body," how are we to understand God giving the Revelation to His Son Jesus? We believe that the dependence of the Lord Jesus upon His Father, so often referred to in the Gospels, is seen here as continuing in the Savior's glorified state. When Jesus was created he was a human being. He is indeed a human being forever. If this were not so, He could not "call us brethren" (Heb.2:11).

Jesus had a will of His own which He could have exercised contrary to His Father's will. He said, "Not what I will, but what you will" (Mark 14:36). Two separate wills demand that the Father and the Son are different and distinct from one another. How else are we to understand the child Jesus "increasing in favor with God and man" (Luke 2:52)?

To interpret those words to mean that the human part of Jesus was increasing in favor with the Deity side of Jesus is unfathomable. The simple explanation of this passage is that Jesus the man, God's only begotten Son, increased in favor with His Father and with men.

It seems that by commencing with the hypothesis that the Father and the Son are inseparably one being, a blind spot is created as regards the abundant Scriptural evidence that teaches the separate functions of the Father and the Son. God is one but He is not a man; Jesus the man is also one, but He is not God, He is the only begotten Son of God.